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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WEBSTER).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
December 14, 2011.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DANIEL WEBSTER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2011, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Over this past weekend, a published article in a North Carolina paper was titled, "U.S. Envoy: Troops could stay in Afghanistan," subtitled, "The White House echoed that 2014 is not a deadline for total withdrawal." I would like to submit the article for the RECORD, Mr. Speaker.

I will read the last sentence of the article:

"At a conference in Bonn, Germany, last week, President Hamid Karzai and

other Afghan officials called for political and military support for at least another decade."

This is coming from a man who, according to CNN, told a group of tribal elders last month, "America is powerful, has more money, but we are lions here. Lions have the habit of not liking strangers getting into their house." President Karzai continued by saying, "We want to say that Iran is our brother. During the years of jihad, Iran has been one of the best countries for hospitality for Afghans. They are our brother."

Mr. Speaker, it just amazes me that he keeps saying that he doesn't even like us, but when he needs us, then he likes us. Our young men and women in the military are over there, losing their legs, their arms—and dying. How in the world can we continue to spend \$10 billion a month when this man says that Iran is its friend—"they are our brother"?

The American people are sick and tired, quite frankly, of being in Afghanistan. Recently, when I spoke on the floor, I received a letter shortly thereafter from Jean Bonney Smith in Idaho regarding a recent floor speech that I gave. I want to quote a couple of comments. Then I would like to submit her letter for the RECORD, Mr. Speaker.

"Everything you said made perfect sense. These are things I've been thinking for 2 or 3 years, too. Karzai's most recent remarks were just the last slap in the face of the American people. How can you convince your fellow Republicans of these truths? We can't just stay on this 'War, Inc.' course, waiting for the next election. It is criminal to our troops."

There are so many people across this Nation who just wonder why we continue to support a corrupt leader in a country that will never, never change.

I hope, as we get into the new year, that those of us in both parties can find legislation, as I have worked with

Representative MCGOVERN before, which we can submit in the House so that we can get this House behind getting our troops out, because, believe me, we'll be there for 5 to 10 more years. It's not fair and it's not right.

Beside me is a picture from the Greensboro News-Record. It was taken a few months ago, but this tells it all. The title reads, "Get Out," and there are soldiers taking a flag-draped transfer case off the plane.

It is time to bring our troops home from Afghanistan. It is time to fix the problems here in America, to create jobs in America. We can certainly use that \$10 billion a month that we are sending to Afghanistan and spend it right here on the American people and do what's right to get America back on its feet.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will close as I always do:

From the bottom of my heart, God, please bless our men and women in uniform. God, please bless the families of our men and women in uniform. God, please hold in Your arms the families who have given a child, dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I ask God to bless the House and Senate that we will do what's right in the eyes of God. I ask God to give strength, wisdom, and courage to President Obama.

And three times I will ask: God, please, God, please, God, please continue to bless America.

[From the News & Observer, Dec. 2011]

U.S. ENVOY: TROOPS COULD STAY IN
AFGHANISTAN

(By Rod Nordland)

KABUL, AFGHANISTAN.—The U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan on Saturday raised the possibility that U.S. combat troops could stay in the country beyond the 2014 deadline that the White House had set for their withdrawal.

Ambassador Ryan Crocker, speaking with a small group of journalists, said that is the Afghan government wanted U.S. troops to stay longer, the withdrawal could be slowed.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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